financial assistance to the State Governments for improving their policing infrastructure.

Ultras in NE

4751. SHRI PARMESHWAR KUMAR AGARWALLA: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact the activities of Ultras are on increase recently in North East; and

(b) the steps being taken to nab the Ultras and with what result?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI I.D. SWAMI): (a) and (b) Militant activities in Manipur and Tripura have shown an increase in recent past. The situation in rest of the North-East, including Assam and Nagaland, has shown a distinct improvement.

Steps taken by the Government to combat militancy in the North-East include, *inter alia*, deployment of Central Para Military Forces and Army; improved coordination and sharing of intelligence between the security forces; modernisation/upgradation of State Police forces; reimbursement of security related expenditure; sanction of Special Central Assistance to the State Governments; declaration of the most seriously affected areas as 'disturbed areas' and notification of the major insurgent groups as unlawful associations'. The situation is also kept under watch and is reviewed from time to time for taking appropriate action.

As per available information, during 1999 and till May 3, 2000, a total of 628 militants have been killed and 1862 arrested in the North-Eastern States.

ULFA's Shelter in Bhutan

4752. SHRI PARMESHWAR KUMAR AGARWALLA: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the statement made by Assam Chief Minister that Bhutan is giving shelter to ULFA and Bodo militants;

(b) if so, what are Government's comments thereon; and

(c) whether Government propose to take up the matter with Government of Bhutan?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI I.D. SWAMI): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Reports indicate that there are camps